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LETTER DATED 8 OCTOBER 1999 FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to convey the attached communication, dated 6 October 1999, which I have received from the Secretary-General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would bring it to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(Signed) Kofi A. ANNAN

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Annex

Letter dated 6 October 1999 from the Secretary-General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization addressed to the Secretary-General

In accordance with Security Council resolution 1088 (1996), I attach the monthly report on the operations of the Stabilization Force. I would appreciate your making this report available to the Security Council.

(Signed) Javier SOLANA

Enclosure

Monthly report to the Security Council on the operations of the Stabilization Force

1. Over the reporting period (21 August-20 September), there were approximately 31,000 troops deployed in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia, with contributions from all North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) allies and from 16 non-NATO countries. Stabilization Force (SFOR) troops continued to conduct surveillance and reconnaissance by means of ground and air patrols, with combat aircraft flying approximately 93 hours.

2. SFOR troops continued to monitor compliance with the provisions of Security Council resolution 1160 (1998), prohibiting the transport of weapons into the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia with an intensified presence on the ground, in order to enforce the embargo. Encouraging results have been reported in weapons being handed over voluntarily by the entities, or being uncovered by SFOR.

3. SFOR continues to monitor the movement of controlled petroleum products into the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia by establishing traffic control points, and to date, 26 violations have been reported. SFOR handed over responsibility for the vehicles in question to the United Nations International Police Task Force (IPTF) or to local police, who subsequently escorted them back to their point of origin. An SFOR monitoring team has also been deployed to the refinery in Bosanski Brod to receive advance information on fuel movements, in order to increase the efficiency of border controls.

4. On 31 August, two hand grenades exploded at a building belonging to the Joint Commission Observers in Doboj. The building was damaged, but there were no injuries to personnel.

Cooperation and compliance by the parties

5. Over the reporting period, the situation in theatre remained stable, with the entities in substantial compliance with the military provisions of the Peace Agreement. There was moderate reaction in the Republika Srpska to the detention of General Talic, the Bosnian Serb Army Chief-of-Staff, in Vienna on 24 August, but the political situation there remains tense.

6. Over the reporting period, there were again isolated incidents of intimidation and violence in response to the return of refugees and displaced persons, with houses damaged or destroyed by grenades or home-made bombs. At the end of August, approximately 60 Bosnian Serbs, en route to a scheduled house assessment, were confronted by a group of around 50 violent and hostile Bosniacs near Bocinja in Multinational Division North (MND (North)). SFOR troops monitored the situation and provided security support to the IPTF and to local police on the ground. There were no injuries, and the Bosnian Serbs decided to postpone their visit. At the beginning of September, Bosniac returnees were shelled with five mortar rounds when resettling in the area of Faziagica Kula in

MND (South-East). There were no casualties, but SFOR troops monitored the area and continue to maintain a presence there.

7. Despite these incidents, during the month of August there was a significant increase in the number of minority returns of displaced persons and refugees as compared with the month of July. In August, SFOR troops monitored 5,641 minority returns and over 7,000 displaced persons and refugees conducted house visits and cleanings.

8. On 25 August, locals in the Bosniac district of Lipa in MND (South-West) once again established a roadblock outside the SFOR base there, in protest at the extra traffic generated by SFOR convoys crossing the village. The protests continued for approximately three days until the roadblock was removed on order of the local authorities.

9. Over the reporting period, SFOR conducted a total of 357 military weapons storage sites inspections: 126 Bosniac; 70 Bosnian Croat; 121 Bosnian Serb; and 40 Federation.

10. SFOR troops monitored a total of 1,071 training and movement activities: 437 Bosniac; 127 Bosnian Croat; 409 Bosnian Serb; and 98 Federation. The training and movement ban on the Republika Srpska Police Anti-Terrorist Brigade remains in effect until further notice, because of the Brigade's non-compliance with instructions of the Commander of SFOR to the parties.

11. The summer demining campaign continued, with the deployment of 44 Entity Armed Forces demining teams. Over the reporting period, these teams conducted 621 mine-clearing operations, removing 5 anti-tank mines, 484 anti-personnel mines and 15 items of unexploded ordnance from 71,839 square metres of land.

12. On 9 September, a meeting of the Joint Military Commission took place at SFOR headquarters in Sarajevo. Among the topics discussed were training and movement activities, ammunition storage implementation and Brcko demilitarization. The next meeting is scheduled for 9 December.

Cooperation with international organizations

13. Within capabilities, and in accordance with its mandate, SFOR continues to provide assistance to the international organizations in Bosnia and Herzegovina, including the United Nations Mission in Bosnia (UNMIBH) and IPTF, the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, the Office of the High Representative (OHR), the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

14. SFOR continues to play an active role in supporting OHR efforts to establish joint institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina, particularly the Standing Committee on Military Matters. As reported last month, significant progress had been made over the summer period in the establishment of the new secretariat of the Standing Committee on Military Matters, with the basic

administrative infrastructure largely in place, and rules of procedure having been agreed "ad referendum". However, following the detention of General Talic at the end of August, the Republika Srpska delegation refused to attend the 8 September meeting of the Standing Committee on Military Matters, which was consequently cancelled. Firm action by OHR, SFOR and OSCE, including a joint demarche by the High Representative, the Commander of SFOR and the Head of OSCE in Bosnia and Herzegovina appeared to have resolved the issue, and the meeting was rescheduled for 23 September. However, the meeting was again postponed until early October.

Outlook

15. The return of refugees and displaced persons is likely to continue to lead to isolated acts of intimidation and violence.